

## Chris O'Brien

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**From:** Eric Grieshaber <[eric.j.grieshaber@gmail.com](mailto:eric.j.grieshaber@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 21, 2020 3:56 PM  
**To:** Chris O'Brien  
**Subject:** house committee on finance comment

Hello,

My name is Eric Grieshaber and I am a resident of Providence. I am writing to demand that Governor Raimondo, Mayor Elorza, and the members of the City Council strongly prioritize revising the city budget to reallocate all funds from the Police Division to satisfy community wellbeing, mental health, and the needs of its residents. Both currently and historically, police forces have been ineffective at keeping local communities safe by perpetuating the oppression of residents who are people of color, undocumented, mentally ill, disabled, and LGBTQ. Though Providence has received a \$700,000 grant to formulate a Behavioral Health Response Team, that amount does not stack up to the nearly \$90 million proposed for Police in 2021. The current budget proposal has allocated \$154,450 on guns and ammunition, \$1,461,620 for 50 new police recruits, and \$963,626 for uniforms and "wearing apparel," presumably including more of the officer riot gear that is currently being used to suppress peaceful protests. Imagine how much those dollars could accomplish when used to fund low-income and public housing, education, resources for formerly incarcerated individuals, and public transportation, as Direct Action for Rights and Equality has demanded.

Providence may be a small city, but we have shown that we can make a huge impact on the U.S. at large. We desperately need to change the way we distribute our finances so that our tax dollars go to the safety and welfare of communities, not cops.

Thank you for your time,  
Eric Grieshaber  
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